



# HOPE-FULL LIVING

• *Daily Devotions for Living Life to the Fullest* •

Creative  
Communications  
Sample

❧ *The Season of Advent* ❧



Welcome to  
**HOPE-FULL  
LIVING**

• *Daily Devotions for Living Life to the Fullest* •

The season of Advent conjures up many remembrances of Decembers past. One of the most familiar activities each year was putting up and decorating the family Christmas tree. Several devotions in this Advent resource capture this special moment of awe and excitement.

The Christmas tree is a sentimental symbol for us of the living presence of Christ in our midst. Just as our Christmas trees are evergreen, so God's love for us in Jesus is everlasting. Just as our trees point to the ceiling, our Savior born in Bethlehem points us to heaven. Just as our trees are decorated with ornaments, our Savior adorns us with the blessings of forgiveness, life and salvation through his birth in and among us.

As we gather around our Christmas trees with friends and family this Advent and Christmas season, let us continue to remember and share with those among us, both young and old, what the baby born in Bethlehem means to us each and every day.

*Dr. Rich Bimler*

*Honorary Editor*

*Ambassador of Health, Hope and Aging*

*rbimler@lutheranlifecommunities.org*

Sunday, the First Week of Advent

# Suddenly It's Advent

*Salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.*

*Romans 13:11*

This Advent we are one year closer to Christ's second Advent, when he returns to welcome us home to heaven. It is Christ who comes at Advent, but his coming is not restricted to a certain season. For example, a couple brings food to a hungry family at Thanksgiving. For this family it is suddenly Advent. Christ's love has come in the gift of food. Parents pray in the doctor's office. The doctor tells them that their child's cancer is not malignant and can be cured. It was Advent. An aged husband finally breathed his last. He skipped Christmas, Epiphany and Lent and for him it was Easter. His next Advent would be Christ's second coming.

So, in this Advent season and in every season God's people rejoice. We welcome Christ and reach out to others with his love. For them it will suddenly be Advent.

*Lord, fashion me to be a caring person who reaches out to bring your hope to people. Amen.*

*Give: Do something special for someone.*

*Read: Romans 8:28-39*

*Leo Symmank  
Seabrook, TX*

Monday, the First Week of Advent

# Preparing for Action

*Therefore, preparing your minds for action ...  
set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought  
to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

1 Peter 1:13

During December, people are busy preparing shopping lists, menus, get-togethers, Christmas cards and home decor. Christians also are preparing in a spiritual way during Advent. Perhaps the passing of years, as we become less able to entertain, shop and decorate, can help us refocus our Advent preparing.

The apostle Peter urges Christians to be “preparing your minds for action” (1 Peter 1:13). How might we do that? We can think about our faith and how it affects our actions. We can think about people who need to hear about their Savior. We can think about how and when we could share that Good News. Most of all, we can follow the encouragement in today’s verse: “Set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

*Dear Father, I set my hope fully on your grace.  
Help me prepare my mind for action. Amen.*

*Prepare: Set aside time for reflection on Jesus.*

*Read: Luke 12:35-40; 1 Peter 1:13-19*

Marj Maynard  
Billings, MO

Tuesday, the First Week of Advent

# Waiting for a Promise

*Waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.*

*Titus 2:13*

In 1969, Irish playwright Samuel Beckett won the Nobel Prize for Literature, and the title of his play *Waiting for Godot* became a catch phrase. The play ended with Godot not coming.

During Advent, we also wait. Our waiting, however, is for the fulfillment of a promise, God's promise of a Messiah. After 400 years without a prophet, Israel was still waiting, and God did not fail them or us. Though many then and now can't find the answer, we know that the promise was fulfilled in a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes. Let us not forget as we wait to celebrate the coming of the Christ Child, that only God keeps promises perfectly. That knowledge far surpasses earthly expectations and gifts under the tree. Only one promise, one waiting, has a sure ending.

*Thank you, Lord, for your promise of the Christ who came for us. Amen.*

*Dig deep: Find joy in waiting, and know that God is able to keep his promise.*

*Read: Romans 8:22-25; Psalm 27:11-14*

*Judy Scherr  
Lemay, MO*

Wednesday, the First Week of Advent

# The Jesus Prayer

*Have mercy on me, O God.*

*Psalm 51:1*

Where have I been all these years? I was reading a devotional booklet for Advent. The author called my attention to “The Jesus Prayer.” I thought he would be writing about the Lord’s Prayer, the “Our Father.” How wrong I was! He was writing about a prayer that has been prayed throughout the history of the church. I had called it the “Lord, Have Mercy” prayer. He called it “The Jesus Prayer.” That’s a good name. After all, mercy pictures the tender love a mother has for her children.

How appropriate the name, “The Jesus Prayer,” is for Advent. As Jesus comes to us, we pray, “Lord, have mercy.” As sinners, we cry for his mercy. He forgives us. The angel said to the shepherds, “For unto you is born this day ... a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” John the Baptist proclaimed as Jesus came to him, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.”

*Lord Jesus, help me live in the light of your mercy.  
Amen.*

*Search: Look up in your concordance and ponder the verses that use the word mercy.*

*Read: Psalm 51:1-12*

*Walter M. Schoedel  
Webster Groves, MO*

Thursday, the First Week of Advent

# What's in Your Waiting?

*[Jesus] ordered them ... to wait for the promise of the Father.*

*Acts 1:4-5*

There are all kinds of waiting. Waiting in traffic. Waiting in line at the DMV. Waiting for results of a biopsy. What's the result? Frustration, restlessness and sometimes dread. Then there's waiting at the airport to greet a loved one. Waiting for a grandchild to be born. Waiting to open the presents under the tree. Can't you just feel the joy, hope and expectation?

Which type of waiting fills your Advent? Do you let the hassles of the season fill you with dread or the promises of the season fill you with joy? As children of the heavenly Father, our waiting can be tinged with hope and expectation because of his promise of eternity for all who believe in his Son as Savior. Isn't that a better way to wait?

*Gracious Father, fill us with your Holy Spirit as we wait in anticipation for the return of Jesus, your Son, our Savior. Amen.*

*Reflect:* Use your times of waiting to reflect upon the promises of the Father.

*Read:* Lamentations 3:22-26; 2 Peter 3:14-18

*Jane Wilke  
Woodbury, MN*

Friday, the First Week of Advent

# Through My Window

*And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the baby lying in a manger.*

*Luke 2:16*

My wife looked through her winter window last Advent and saw neighborhood people walking outside—two women speed-walking, a young man with a knit cap walking his little dog and a family with the mother in the lead, followed by the father and then their teenage son on his phone bringing up the rear. When she described her view to me, I wondered, “Where are they going? Will they find their way to the manger this year?”

Did any Bethlehem villagers observe a group of shepherds on their way from the fields into their town? Did they ask, “Where are they going at this hour?” We know they were hurrying to find the newborn Savior of the world. Villagers would learn about Jesus from the shepherds as they returned. As you watch neighbors from your winter window, will God give you opportunities to point them to the manger with glad and thankful hearts?

*Lord, use me to share Jesus’ birth with friends and neighbors. Amen.*

*Invite: Invite someone to Jesus’ manger.*

*Read: Luke 2:8-20*

*Stephen J. Carter  
Oakville, MO*



Saturday, the First Week of Advent

# Advent Humility

*Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.*

*Philippians 2:5*

Jesus did not consider his equality with God something to be held onto at all costs. He took on himself human form and shouldered the cost of our sin, humbling himself to take on our death for us. We are used to these words introducing a lesson for the season of Lent. But they are Advent words as well.

Humble Mary gave birth to humble Jesus. "Let it be to me as you have said," she told the angel (Luke 1:38). God himself came in humility. Now that is a contradiction in terms! But it is true nonetheless. The Advent message reminds us of Micah's ancient words: "Walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). See how much God loves you! He walks with you as Immanuel. After all these years, we are still filled with wonder. We see; we believe; we adore him. Yes, we walk with him.

*Thank you, Lord Jesus, for your wondrous Advent journey to me. Amen.*

*Walk: Take a walk today and remember the Lord walks with you.*

*Read: Philippians 2:5-11; Luke 1:46-55*

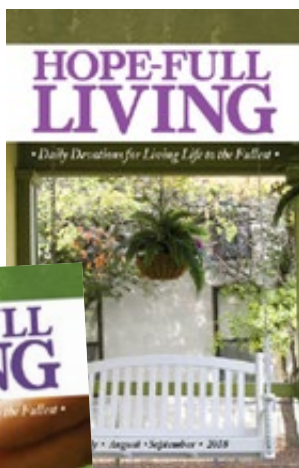
*Don Schatz  
Kenmore, WA*

# HOPE-FULL LIVING

• *Daily Devotions for Living Life to the Fullest* •

The daily devotions in *Hope-Full Living* help to inspire seniors with the assurance that “This very day, I have a body, a mind, a spirit and a message— God’s rejuvenating Gospel message to and through me—to share with my world, my friends and my Lord.”

*Hope-Full Living* is not just a daily devotional. It also includes suggestions for putting hope into action each and every day.



AS LOW AS  
**\$6.76**  
PER YEAR\*

**To subscribe, call toll-free: 1-855-325-4673**

(mention promo code **51800HF7**)

— OUTSIDE U.S. PLEASE CALL 1-937-528-6190 —

**Order online at: [www.hopefuldevotions.com](http://www.hopefuldevotions.com)**

\*WHEN YOU ORDER 20 OR MORE COPIES.

This book, along with many other Creative Communications for the Parish products, is available on **amazonkindle** and **nook**.

Edited by Rich Bimler, Mark Zimmermann and Carol Geisler. Cover image: Shutterstock. © 2018 by Creative Communications for the Parish, a division of Bayard, Inc. 1564 Fencorp Drive, Fenton, MO 63026, (800) 325-9414. [www.creativecommunications.com](http://www.creativecommunications.com). Printed in the USA. All rights reserved.

HF7